

COUNTRY DATA: Norway : Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

Two centuries of Viking raids into Europe tapered off following the adoption of Christianity by King Olav TRYGGVASON in 994. Conversion of the Norwegian kingdom occurred over the next several decades. In 1397, Norway was absorbed into a union with Denmark that lasted more than four centuries. In 1814, Norwegians resisted the cession of their country to Sweden and adopted a new constitution. Sweden then invaded Norway but agreed to let Norway keep its constitution in return for accepting the union under a Swedish king. Rising nationalism throughout the 19th century led to a 1905 referendum granting Norway independence. Although Norway remained neutral in World War I, it suffered heavy losses to its shipping. Norway proclaimed its neutrality at the outset of World War II, but was nonetheless occupied for five years by Nazi Germany (1940-45). In 1949, neutrality was abandoned and Norway became a member of NATO. Discovery of oil and gas in adjacent waters in the late 1960s boosted Norway's economic fortunes. In referenda held in 1972 and 1994, Norway rejected joining the EU. Key domestic issues include immigration and integration of ethnic minorities, maintaining the country's extensive social safety net with an aging population, and preserving economic competitiveness.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Northern Europe, bordering the North Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, west of Sweden
Area	total: 323,802 sq km
Climate	temperate along coast, modified by North Atlantic Current; colder interior with increased precipitation and colder summers; rainy year-round on west coast
Natural Resources	petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, titanium, pyrites, nickel, fish, timber, hydropower
Total Renewable Water Resources	381.4 cu km (2005)
Freshwater Withdrawal	total: 2.4 cu km/yr (23%/67%/10%) per capita: 519 cu m/yr (1996)
Natural Hazards	rockslides, avalanches
Environmental Issues	water pollution; acid rain damaging forests and adversely affecting lakes, threatening fish stocks; air pollution from vehicle emissions

PEOPLE

Population	4,691,849 (July 2011 est.)
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Ethnic Groups	Norwegian 94.4% (includes Sami, about 60,000), other European 3.6%, other 2% (2007 estimate)
Religions	Church of Norway 85.7%, Pentecostal 1%, Roman Catholic 1%, other Christian 2.4%, Muslim 1.8%, other 8.1% (2004)
Languages	Bokmal Norwegian (official), Nynorsk Norwegian (official), small Sami- and Finnish-speaking minorities; note - Sami is official in six municipalities
Literacy Rate	definition: age 15 and over can read and write total population: 100% male: 100% female: 100%
Major Infectious Diseases	N/A
GOVERNMENT	
Type	constitutional monarchy
Independence	7 June 1905 (Norway declared the union with Sweden dissolved)
Constitution	17 May 1814; amended many times
Legal System	mixture of customary law, civil law system, and common law traditions; Supreme Court renders advisory opinions to legislature when asked; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	barley, wheat, potatoes; pork, beef, veal, milk; fish
Industries	petroleum and gas, food processing, shipbuilding, pulp and paper products, metals, chemicals, timber, mining, textiles, fishing
Import commodities	machinery and equipment, chemicals, metals, foodstuffs
Import Partners	Sweden 13.86%, Germany 12.89%, China 7.8%, Denmark 6.78%, US 6.16%, UK 6.01% (2009)
Export Commodities	petroleum and petroleum products, machinery and equipment, metals, chemicals, ships, fish
Export Partners	UK 24.28%, Germany 13.4%, Netherlands 10.87%, France 8.55%, Sweden 5.76%, US 4.82% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$59,100 (2010 est.)

Population below poverty line	NA%
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*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.